

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 204741
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY EA/VLC:MPOWENS:JY
APPROVED BY EA:ROAKLEY
EA/ANZ:FBENNETT
S/S-O TOM MARTIN
EA/VLC:SRLYNE

-----067233 121120Z /15

R 120206Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204741

EXDIS, FOR AMB FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, US, VM

SUBJECT: LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK

1. THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK. I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR PASSING IT TO PEACOCK ON MY BEHALF ALONG WITH THE SECRETARY'S AUGUST 4 STATEMENT ON VIETNAM WHICH APPEARED IN THE WIRELESS FILE.
2. BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR ANDREW:

I APPRECIATED VERY MUCH RECEIVING YOUR PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF YOUR RECENT TALKS WITH PHAN HIEN. I AGREE WITH YOUR ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS PROMPTING VIETNAM'S CURRENT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH ASEAN AND THE WEST, AS WELL AS REINFORCING ITS TIES WITH THE USSR BY JOINING CEMA.

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ANOTHER SET OF CONSIDERATIONS BEHIND VIETNAM'S RECENT ACTIONS MAY WELL BE ECONOMIC. IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT THE COMBINATION OF MAJOR RESOURCE DIVERSION TO MILITARY BURDENS IN LAOS AND ESPECIALLY CAMBODIA, THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF ACCELERATED SOCIALIZATION IN THE CITIES AND COUNTRYSIDE WHICH BEGAN LAST MARCH, AND THE DIFFICULTIES IN REBUILDING

ALREADY BEING EXPERIENCED, ARE CAUSING VERY GRAVE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

PHAN HIEN'S COMMENT TO YOU ABOUT THE REFUGEE FLOW LASTING FOR SEVERAL YEARS SEEMS ALL TOO TRUE. WE DISCUSSED THIS WITH THE ASEAN MINISTERS HERE AND HAVE SOME SPECIFIC IDEAS ON WHICH AUSTRALIA, THE UNITED STATES AND ASEAN MAY BE ABLE TO AGREE. YOU SHOULD HAVE A REPORT FROM YOUR EMBASSY BY NOW.

OF PARTICULAR VALUE IN THE MONTHS TO COME, I BELIEVE, WILL BE THE IMPRESSIONS PHAN HIEN GAINED FROM YOU REGARDING THE REALITIES FACING U.S. POLICY TOWARD VIETNAM. YOUR STATEMENTS TO HIM THAT NEEDLESSLY HARSH VIETNAMESE PROPAGANDA ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES HAVE MADE NORMALIZATION MORE DIFFICULT THAN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A YEAR AGO SEEM TO BE HAVING A SALUTARY EFFECT. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT WAS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT PHAN HIEN WAS WILLING TO CONCEDE TO YOU THAT VIETNAM UNDERSTOOD U.S. DIFFICULTIES. HE, PHAM VAN DONG AND OTHER TOP SRV OFFICIALS ARE BENDING OVER BACKWARDS TO MAKE SOOTHING STATEMENTS AND WELCOME AMERICAN VISITORS.

THE CONSULTATIONS YOU WILL HAVE WITH THE VIETNAMESE ON DISARMAMENT ITEMS AT THE UNGA WILL PROVIDE AN INDICATION OF HOW HANOI INTENDS TO BALANCE ITS FUTURE PUBLIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WESTERN NATIONS AND THE USSR. THE
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STRIDENT SOVIET-CHINESE POLITICAL BATTLE, EXTENDING INTO THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AS WELL AS ELSEWHERE, WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR VIETNAM TO FIND A MIDDLE GROUND.

I AGREE THAT VIETNAM'S ABILITY TO PRESERVE ITS LATITUDE VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS WILL BE ENHANCED IF HANOI RECEIVES SOME ENCOURAGEMENT FROM US IN RESPONSE TO ITS NEWLY-MOUNTED DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES. IN THIS REGARD, WE HAVE BEEN TELLING THE PRESS THAT WE WERE ENCOURAGED BY THE RECENT VISIT TO HAWAII BY VIETNAMESE MIA EXPERTS. YOU SHOULD ALSO KNOW THAT THE VIETNAMESE DELEGATION LEADER IN HAWAII OFFERED A MEMBER OF OUR DELEGATION SOME "PERSONAL" VIEWS ON HOW NORMALIZATION MIGHT BE ACHIEVED. THESE TRACKED CLOSELY WITH WHAT PHAN HIEN TOLD YOU AND WERE UNDOUBTEDLY PUT FORWARD UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM HANOI. ALTHOUGH, AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, THE FACT OF THESE "UNOFFICIAL CHATS" HAS BECOME KNOWN TO THE PRESS, THEIR CONTENTS HAVE NOT, AND CY AND I PARTICULARLY DO NOT ACCEPT THEM AS AN OFFICIAL SRV POSITION. I ATTACH CY'S AUGUST 4 PRESS STATEMENT.

I AM HOPEFUL THAT THE VISIT BY SOME TEN U.S. CONGRESSMEN

TO HANOI AND HO CHI MINH CITY LATER THIS MONTH WILL BE VIEWED AS AN ADDITIONAL INDICATION THAT VIETNAM IS PREPARED TO ADOPT A MORE FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE ON NORMALIZATION. WHILE ;HE VISIT WAS SCHEDULED AS A RESULT OF INITIATIVES TAKEN BY CONGRESSMAN MONTGOMERY, WE HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT WE SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF A HIGH-LEVEL CONGRESSIONAL VISIT AT THIS TIME. THE DELEGATION'S PRIMARY INTEREST WILL BE MIAS BUT THEY HAVE TOLD THE VIETNAMESE THEY WOULD BE INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING BROADER ISSUES AFFECTING US-SRV RELATIONS. SINCE THEY ARE A CONSERVATIVE GROUP, THEIR REPORT COULD HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC OPINION.

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AGAIN, LET ME SAY HOW MUCH I VALUE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE THOUGHTS WITH YOU ON VIETNAM AND OTHER ISSUES. I APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST IN OUR RECENTLY CONCLUDED CONSULTATIONS WITH ASEAN AND AM HAPPY TO SAY THAT THEY SEEM TO HAVE BEEN A GREAT SUCCESS. I HAVE ALREADY BRIEFED ALAN RENOUF AND WE WILL BE SENDING A FULL ASSESSMENT TO OUR POSTS ABOUT THE TIME YOU GET THIS. LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU PICK UP IN THE WAY OF CONSIDERED REACTIONS AFTER THE ASEAN DELEGATIONS RETURN HOME.

I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN IN NEW YORK THIS FALL.

WARM REGARDS, RICHARD HOLBROOKE.

CHRISTOPHER

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

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DRAFTED BY:EA:RBOAKLEY
APPROVED BY:EA:RBOAKLEY
S/S:MVKENNEDY

-----095250 150610Z /23

R 160013Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204741

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR MANSFIELD

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 204741 ACTION CANBERRA 12 AUG 78.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204741

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CHRISTOPHER

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UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1757418
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK
TAGS: PDIP, US, VM, AS, (PEACOCK, ANDREW), (HOLBROOKE, RICHARD)
To: CANBERRA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cebd8264-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
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20 Mar 2014
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